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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,836	08/25/2003	Hiroshi Nomura	P23686	1333
7055	7590	09/16/2004	EXAMINER	
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C. 1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE RESTON, VA 20191			SMITH, ARTHUR A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2851	

DATE MAILED: 09/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/646,836

Applicant(s)

NOMURA, HIROSHI

Examiner

Arthur A Smith

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 8/25/03.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 10 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-9 and 12-20 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/17/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this

Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nomura et al. (US 2001/0017738 A1).

In reference to claim 1, Nomura et al. discloses a lens barrel comprising: an annular ring, ref. 11 which is non-rotatable and includes at least one circumferential guide groove, ref. 11b, formed on an inner peripheral surface thereof, said circumferential guide groove being open at an end of said annular ring via at least one insertable/removable aperture extending in an optical axis direction, paragraphs 50 and 57; a first rotatable ring, ref. 17, supported inside said annular ring and rotatable about a rotational axis extending in a direction of said optical axis, said first rotatable ring including at least one rotation-guiding projection, ref. 17c slidably engaged in said at least one circumferential guide groove, paragraph 57; a second rotatable ring, ref. 18, which rotates together with said first rotatable ring and is capable only of axial movement relative to said first ring, said second rotatable ring including at least one engaging projection slidably engaged in said at least one circumferential guide groove together with

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said at least one rotation-guiding projection, wherein said at least one engaging projection is insertable into and removable from said at least one circumferential guide groove in said optical axis direction through said at least one insertable/removable aperture at a first assembling/disassembling angular position of said first rotatable ring and second rotatable ring, paragraph 58; and a coupling ring, ref. 16, which is positioned inside said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring to be non-rotatable relative to said annular ring, said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring coupled by said coupling ring to be rotatable with respect to said coupling ring, wherein a coupler provided between said coupling ring and said second rotatable ring is configured to be disengaged in said optical axis direction at a second assembling/disassembling angular position of said first rotatable ring and second rotatable ring; wherein said first assembling/disassembling angular position and said second assembling/disassembling angular position are substantially the same angular position, paragraph 53.

In reference to claims 2 and 3, Nomura et al. discloses wherein at least one biasing member, ref. 21, configured to bias said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring in opposite directions away from each other such that said at least one engaging projection and said at least one rotation-guiding projection are pressed against two opposed surfaces in said circumferential guide groove, respectively, paragraphs 54 and 70.

In reference to claims 10 and 11, Nomura et al. discloses wherein an advancing/retracting mechanism configured to move said first rotatable ring and

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said second rotatable ring in said optical axis direction between front and rear movement limits in said optical axis direction relative to said annular ring, wherein said at least cone rotation-guiding projection and said at least one engaging projection are engaged in said at least one circumferential guide groove of said annular ring when said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring are moved to one of said front and rear movement limits by said advancing/retracting mechanism such that said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring rotate at an axial fixed position without moving in said optical axis direction, and wherein said coupling ring linearly moves in said optical axis direction together with said first rotatable ring and said second rotatable ring, paragraphs 54 and 55.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4-9 and 12-20 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arthur A Smith whose telephone number is (571) 272 2129. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays during the same hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy Nguyen can be reached on (572) 272 2258. The fax

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phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Arthur A. Smith
September 9, 2004